

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1 - 10.(Cancelled)

11. (New) A method for migrating operation of a computer system from in-clear working to encrypted working, the computer system comprising a first node, a second node and a communications link connecting the first and second nodes, the method including the steps:

- (a) initially setting the nodes to a first state in which only in-clear working is permitted,
- (b) during a migration phase, setting the nodes to a second state wherein initially only in-clear working is enabled, and wherein encrypted working is enabled after a message key is established between the nodes;
- (c) installing means for encrypted working in the first node;
- (d) subsequently installing means for encrypted working in the second node;
- (e) using said means for encrypted working to establish a message key between the second node and the first node; and
- (f) after means for encrypted working has been installed in both nodes, setting the nodes to a third state in which only encrypted working is permitted.

12. (New) A method as claimed in claim 11, wherein said means for encrypted working comprises a long-term key.

13. (New) A method as claimed in claim 11, wherein after means for encrypted working is installed in the first node, the first node attempts to establish a message key with the second node, and when the first node fails to establish a message key because means for encrypted working is not yet installed in the second node, a marker value is stored in the first node, the presence of which marker value serves to suspend further attempts by the first node to establish a message key between said nodes.

14. (New) A method as claimed in claim 11 wherein each said node includes policy files for controlling setting that node to one of the three states.

15. (New) A computer system comprising at least a first node, a second node and a communications link connecting the first node and the second node, the system comprising:

(a) means for setting the system into an in-clear mode, wherein only in-clear working is permitted;

(b) means for setting the system into a migration mode, wherein initially only in-clear working is enabled, and wherein, when means for encrypted working have been installed in either of the nodes, that node attempts to establish a message key with the other node and, if a message key is successfully established, encrypted working is enabled between the nodes; and

(c) means for setting the system into an encrypt mode, wherein only encrypted working is permitted.

16. (New) A computer system as claimed in claim 15, wherein said means for encrypted working comprises a long-term key.

17. (New) A computer system as claimed in claim 15, wherein if the first node fails to establish a message key between said nodes, a marker value is stored in the first node, the presence of which marker value serves to suspend further attempts by the first node to establish a message key between said nodes.

18. (New) A computer system as claimed in claim 15 wherein each said node includes policy files for controlling setting the system to one of the three modes of operation.